



Department of State

TELEGRAM

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E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, NR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - DECEMBER 17, 1993

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY Am DATE 7/6/89
(☒) RELEASE (☐) DECLASSIFY
(☐) EXCISE (☐) DECLASSIFY in PART
(☐) DEFY (☐) Non-responsive info.
FOI, EO or PA exemptions

Authority to:
(☐) DECLASSIFY AS
(☐) DOWNGRADE TS to (☐) SGP (☐) C, OADR

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE, FOLLOWING ARE RELEVANT
EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR DECEMBER 17,
1993. SPOKESMAN WAS ALAN RONDERS.

Q. ALAN, DOES THE DEPARTMENT OR THE GOVERNMENT HAVE ANY
REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE SOVIET UNION IS LOOKING FOR A
WAY OUT OF AFGHANISTAN?

A. THAT'S A RATHER SLEEPING QUESTION. LET ME ADDRESS THE
PRAYDA EDITORIAL UNION. I THINK, PROBABLY GIVES RISE TO
THAT QUESTION.

WE ARE ALWAYS ALERT FOR EVIDENCE OF A SOVIET WILLINGNESS
TO NEGOTIATE A SETTLEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN WHICH WILL LEAD TO
THE WITHDRAWAL OF THEIR TROOPS. A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT
ALLOWING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT AND NON-
ALIGNED AFGHAN GOVERNMENT CHOSEN BY THE AFGHAN PEOPLE

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THEMSELVES, AND AN HONORABLE RETURN OF THE REFUGEES.

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WE WOULD WELCOME CONCRETE SOVIET MOVES IN THIS DIRECTION. WE DO NOT, HOWEVER, SEE EVIDENCE OF CONCRETE CHANGE IN THE SOVIET POSITION AS EXPRESSED IN YESTERDAY'S PRAVDA EDITORIAL. HOWEVER, I WOULD NOTE WE ARE HESITANT IN ANY CASE TO TRY TO DITINE SOVIET POLICIES FROM THIS TYPE OF ARTICLE WHICH HAS CLEARLY GENERATED CONFLICTING INTERPRETATIONS, IF NO WHERE ELSE, IN THE PRESS.

Q. HAVE THERE BEEN ANY SIGNS -- LEAVING PRAVDA OUT OF IT, FOR THE MOMENT -- ANY SIGNS OF FLEXIBILITY, DIRECT OR INDIRECT, BY THE SOVIET UNION, EVEN THROUGH THE S.M.?

A. I THINK I WOULD LEAVE IT WHERE I JUST HAVE. WE HAVEN'T SEEN EVIDENCE IN THE POSITION AS EXPRESSED YESTERDAY IN THE PRAVDA EDITORIAL. I DON'T THINK I WANT TO GO BEYOND THAT.

ONE OTHER THING I THINK IS WORTH NOTING IN THAT EDITORIAL: ON THE QUESTION OF NOT PERSEBIT, OR PURSUING RUJANEEDIN ACROSS THE BORDER INTO PAKISTAN, WE WOULD VIEW WITH GRATE CONCERN ANYTHING THAT THREATENS PAKISTAN OR RISKS ENLARGING THE WAR.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO SUGGEST WHETHER SOVIET MILITARY ACTIVITY IN AFGHANISTAN IN RECENT WEEKS AND MONTHS HAS INCREASED OR DECREASED, WHETHER THEY ARE BRINGING IN MORE MATERIAL AND TROOPS?

A. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING THAT WOULD CHANGE QUALITATIVELY WHAT WE LAST SAID ABOUT THAT. I THINK WE'VE INDICATED THE TROOP LEVELS IN A RANGE -- I WOULD REFER YOU BACK TO UNCLASSIFIED
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WHAT WE'VE SAID ABOUT IT -- BUT I DON'T THINK THERE HAS BEEN A QUALITATIVE CHANGE IN THAT.

Q. ARE YOU IMPLYING BY THAT THERE HAS BEEN SOME QUANTITATIVE SHIFT?

A. NO. WHAT I'M SAYING IS, WHATEVER SMALL SHIFTS THAT MIGHT HAVE TAKEN PLACE ONE DAY OR ANOTHER -- AND I'M NOT SUGGESTING THERE NECESSARILY HAVE BEEN -- BUT OBVIOUSLY, THERE COULD BE MOVEMENT BACK AND FORTH OF REPLACEMENTS

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AND SO ON. BUT THERE IS NOTHING BASIC.

Q. ON THE NIGHT OF DECEMBER 14, UNIFORMED HUNGARIAN POLICE STOOD GUARD WHILE PLAINCLOTHES MEN ARRESTED SIX HUNGARIAN DISSIDENTS, SEARCHED STODA KA, AND MADE OTHER NUMEROUS SEARCHES.

I WONDER IF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE HAS ANY REACTION TO THIS? IS IT IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S VIEW AN ISOLATED

EVENT OR IS IT PART OF A GENERAL CHAOS IN EASTERN EUROPE WHICH IS RELATED TO EVENTS IN POLAND WHICH FOLLOW ANDROPOV'S ELEVATION TO TOP LEADERSHIP IN THE SOVIET UNION?

A. I DON'T THINK I CAN ADDRESS IT QUITE ON THOSE TERMS. LET ME SAY THAT OUR INFORMATION INDICATES THAT ON TUESDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 14, THE POLICE DETAINED SIX OF HUNGARY'S LEADING INTELLECTUALS FOR SEVERAL HOURS, RAISED THEIR APARTMENTS, AND CONFISCATED THEIR SHIZOAT MANUSCRIPTS AND DUPLICATING MACHINES.

WE UNDERSTAND THE INDIVIDUALS WERE CHARGED WITH A BREACH OF HUNGARIAN PRESS LAW AND WERE LET OFF WITH A WARNING. THE UNITED STATES VIEWS WITH CONCERN THIS ACTION BY THE HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT TO RESTRICT FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION
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IN HUNGARY.

Q. DOES THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE THEREBY REEND ITS OWN ASSESSMENT IN THE PREVAILING OPINION REPORTED IN THE PRESS -- IN THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, THE NEW YORK TIMES, CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR AND ELSEWHERE -- THAT HUNGARY IS DOING BETTER THAN THE REST OF EASTERN EUROPE WITH RESPECT TO HUMAN RIGHTS? DOES THIS CAUSE ANY MODIFICATION OF THAT ASSESSMENT?

A. I DON'T THINK WE'VE OFFERED COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENTS OF THAT SORT, AND I DON'T INTEND TO RESPOND TO JOURNALISTIC CHARACTERIZATIONS. THAT'S UP TO THE JOURNALISTS WHO ARE WRITING THE PIECES.

Q. AS LONG AS WE'RE ON EASTERN EUROPE, IS THERE ANY

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REACTION OR RESPONSE TO THE BULGARIAN GOVERNMENT'S STATEMENTS CRITICIZING THE DEBT IN THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE POPE'S ASSASSINATION?

A. WE'RE AWARE OF THE BULGARIAN SERIALS OF COMPLICITY IN THE ATTEMPTS ON THE POPE'S LIFE. AND AS I HAVE INDICATED BEFORE, GIVEN THE EXTREME SENSITIVITY OF THE MATTER, WE HAVE OFFERED FULL COOPERATION IN THE INVESTIGATION TO THE AUTHORITIES OF ITALY, TURKEY, AND OTHER FRIENDLY COUNTRIES, BUT ALSO IN LIGHT OF THE SENSITIVITY OF THE INVESTIGATION, THE FACT THAT IT IS ONGOING JUDICIAL INVESTIGATION, I THINK IT IS INAPPROPRIATE TO COMMENT FURTHER.

B. THE IMF HAS AWARDED A \$600 MILLION LOAN TO HUNGARY I UNDERSTAND AND THIS COMES AM THE HEELS OF A FURTHER \$400 MILLION HARD CURRENCY DEFICIT WHICH ADDS TO THEIR
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\$8.8 BILLION DEFT.

IS THIS LOAN, WHICH IS OBVIOUSLY A BAIL-OUT OPERATION, GIVEN TO HUNGARY AS A REWARD FOR HER LIBERALIZATION IN THE ECONOMY AND TOWARDS HUMAN RIGHTS? AND, IF SO, WHAT RESPONSE DOES THE LATEST REPRESSION HAVE?

A. THE IMF DECISIONS, AS WE HAVE INDICATED BEFORE, ARE TAKEN ON THE BASIS OF ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL MERIT, AND I DON'T HAVE DETAILS ON THAT PARTICULAR ONE.

C. WHEN YOU MENTIONED LECH WALESA YESTERDAY, THE SITUATION WAS NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR. NOW IT TURNS OUT HE WAS TAKEN FOR A 4-HOUR RIDE BY AUTHORITIES, AND IN FACT PREVENTED FROM SPEAKING.

DO YOU HAVE FURTHER COMMENT BASED ON WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED THERE?

A. AS I SAID YESTERDAY, THE POLISH GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO PREVENT HIM FROM SPEAKING PUBLICLY RAISES SERIOUS QUESTIONS ABOUT THE HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT'S ANNOUNCED DESIRE TO SEEK NATIONAL RECONCILIATION.

D. WITH RESPECT TO THIS \$600 MILLION LOAN TO HUNGARY
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IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT DEPRESSIVE DEVELOPMENTS, WILL THE UNITED STATES' INFLUENCE ON THE IMF, WHICH IS CONSIDERABLE, COME TO BEAR ON THE MEMBERSHIP OF HUNGARY, AND WHAT IS THE STATUS OF THE HUNGARIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC IN THE IMF?

A. I GUES I WOULD REFER YOU TO THE IMF ON THE STATUS QUESTION, AND I THINK I'VE ADDRESSED THE CRITERIA HE COULD USE.

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Q. THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAS NO INTEREST IN THE POLITICAL ASPECTS OF LENDING MONEY TO HUNGARY, IS THAT YOUR POSITION?

A. I INDICATED BEFORE THAT THE IMF MAKES ITS DECISIONS BASED ON ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS.

Q. BUT DON'T WE HAVE A REPRESENTATIVE ON THE IMF?

A. I JUST ARTICULATED OUR POSITION ON THAT.

3. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION TAKEN ON DECEMBER 14, YOU HAVE SAID THAT THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT HAS NOT BEEN REQUESTED BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR REPARATIONS

FOR THE KILLING OF U.S. AMBASSADOR DUBS.

IS THERE A REASON FOR THAT POLICY, AND, IF SO, COULD YOU STATE IT? AND HAVE WE HAD A POLICY OF NOT ASKING FOR REPARATIONS WHEN PEOPLE KILL OUR AMBASSADORS?

A. I THINK THAT THE STATEMENT THAT WAS POSTED WILL HAVE TO STAND ON ITS OWN MERITS. I WILL SEE IF ANYBODY CAN ADDRESS THE QUESTION IN THE GENERAL WAY YOU HAVE SUGGESTED

Q. THEN THERE'S A FURTHER QUESTION THAT I'D LIKE TO ASK. IF YOU DO NOT SEEK REPARATIONS FOR THE KILLING OF YOUR AMBASSADORS, DOESN'T THAT ENCOURAGE INTERNATIONAL TOP-LEVEL KILLING LIKE ASSASSINATIONS AGAINST THE POPE?

A. I DON'T THINK IT DOES. NO.

Q. YOU DON'T THINK IT DOES?

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A. I JUST SAID THAT.

Q. ON POLAND AGAIN, HAS THE ADMINISTRATION CONCLUDED ITS REVIEW OF THE LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS TAKEN IN POLAND ON MONDAY, AND, IF SO, WHAT ARE THE CONCLUSIONS?

A. NO, WE HAVE NOT COMPLETED IT.

Q. TWELVE YEARS AGO A HUNGARIAN PILOT BY THE NAME OF ALEXANDRE TOBOKI FLEW A HIS JET OUT OF HUNGARY ON LIBERATION DAY, AND THAT WAS THE DAY THAT SOVIET AMBASSADOR ANDROPOV CALLED THE SOVIET TROOPS INTO HUNGARY TO QUELL THE HUNGARIAN REBELLION.

AT ANY RATE, THIS MAN HAS A SON LEFT IN HUNGARY. IN THE MEANTIME, HIS WIFE HAS DIED. I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAS DONE TO ATTEMPT TO REUNITE THAT FAMILY OF AN UNDOUBTED HUNGARIAN HERO?

A. IS HE HERE?

Q. HE'S IN THE WEST.

A. IS HE IN THE UNITED STATES?

Q. I CANNOT ANSWER YOUR QUESTION.

A. THEN I CAN'T ANSWER YOUR QUESTION.

Q. WOULD IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE IF HE WERE?

A. IF HE WERE APPLYING IN SOME WAY THROUGH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, I SUPPOSE IT MIGHT MAKE SOME DIFFERENCE. IF HE WERE A U.S. CITIZEN, OR SOMETHING OF THAT SORT -- WE LOOK AFTER OUR CITIZENS' INTERESTS FIRST, AND GENERAL ISSUES IN TERMS OF PARTICIPATION OR WHATEVER --
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B. BUT YOU WOULDN'T TURN YOU BACK ON THIS MAN JUST
BECAUSE HE ISN'T A CITIZEN --

A. THAT'S NOT THE ISSUE. SHOULD

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